



South Carolina Volunteer Strategic Assistance Fire Equipment Program

V-SAFE Panel Meeting Minutes April 14, 2022 at 10 a.m. Virtual Meeting

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the South Carolina State Fire, 141 Monticello Trail, Columbia, SC 29203 and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

In order to provide the opportunity for social distancing, the meeting was held via video and teleconference. Members of the public wanting to attend were instructed to email susan.duncan@llr.sc.gov for login instructions.

NOTE: These minutes are a record of the motions, official actions taken by the Panel, and a brief summary of the meeting.

I. Call to Order and Welcome: Chairman James Caggiano

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to all South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. Chairman Caggiano called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Roll Call of Members

The following panel members were present (see below) and a quorum was established. Additionally, LLR employees Susan Duncan, George Stapleton, Laureen Wright (virtual), and Patrick Jarvis (virtual) were present.

V-SAFE Panel Members									
Jonathan Jones	P	James Caggiano	V	Barry McRoy	V	Tony Dicks	V	Tommy Keaton	V
Bill Dunlap	V	Steve Arsenault	V	Randy Swinton	V	Dennis Jackson	A	Thomas Rivers	V

P: Phone V: Virtual A: Absent

III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chief Tommy Rivers made a motion to approve the agenda. Chief Barry McRoy seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Tommy Rivers made a motion to approve the Feb. 22, 2022 minutes. Chief Barry McRoy seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

IV. H. 3252

Chief Jones briefly discussed SC House bill 3252, a pending piece of legislation in the Senate. Staff has been working on this legislation for five years. It would affect, as of today, 405 eligible predominately-volunteer fire departments. Changes include increasing the grant total amount to \$10 million a year, altering the Panel to one with simply oversight responsibilities, and changing from a competitive to an equitable grant process. It also includes building renovations as an eligible category and penalties for not submitting reports.

V. Update and Funding Consideration

To date, there are 76 grant applications and \$2,057,334.42 to distribute. Partial votes indicated by Panel members for discussion include:

- Three and Twenty Fire Department: The total tax amount was added to one line item (cutter). Staff verified the total amount is correct \$28,435.00. No objection to awarding \$28,435.00.
- Canebrake Fire Department: According to the Fire Portal, Canebrake is a predominately-volunteer fire department. However, per the narrative description, the department is not. Chief Jones spoke to the Canebrake fire chief. Based on information received and verified, Canebrake Fire Department does not qualify for V-SAFE funding.

A motion was made by Chief Tommy Rivers. Canebrake Fire Department does not qualify for V-SAFE grant funding based on the application's narrative description. Chief Tony Dicks seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

- St. Phillips Fire Department: The department requested \$30,000. One line item was for four SCBA's with a unit cost of \$3,800 each for a total of \$15,200. Chief Jones spoke to department staff. There was an error while submitting the grant regarding the unit cost – should have been \$5,800.00 each for a total of \$23,200. Additionally, the total \$30,000 request was not justified.

A motion was made by Chief Tony Dicks. St. Phillips Fire Department may be awarded partial funding for the submitted amount of \$15,200. Chief Barry McRoy seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

- Buford Fire Department: The department requested a washer and dryer and listed it as a single project for \$22,984.86. Department staff explained the combined cost. No objection to awarding \$22,984.86.
- Edgefield City Fire Department: The department submitted a grant application with a discrepancy between the unit cost and total cost of the requested dryer (one unit cost \$5,745/ one total cost \$2,805. The submitter explained to Chief Jones he decreased the total cost to not exceed the \$30,000 limit. The mayor verified via email to Chief Jones that funding is available in the city budget to pay the difference. No objection to awarding \$30,000.
- Boiling Springs Fire Department (Spartanburg): The department indicated it secured a corporate donation with no explanation. Chief Jones spoke with the fire chief and verified the corporate sponsor is willing to pay the overage of \$8,100. No objection to funding \$30,000.
- Startex Fire Department: The department requested \$27,673. One partial vote indicated a recommendation to the Panel to fund the requested items – except for two dry suits. With only \$27,423.40 remaining to distribute (a \$250.40 difference), the VSAFE Panel is unable to approve the full requested amount for the department.

A motion was made Chief Barry McRoy to award Startex with partial funding/the remaining balance of \$27,423.40. Chief Randy Swinton seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

A motion was made by Chief Tommy Rivers to award grants based on the final tabulation. Chief Barry McRoy seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Jones stated each fire department and its respective legislator will be notified of the award by next week. Departments not receiving funding may ask State Fire staff for a copy of the Panel member comments.

In total, 70 fire departments in 29 counties will receive funding – with two of those receiving partial funding. The departments not funded in 2022 include: Canebrake, Mullins, Darlington County, Carlisle, Pickens City, and Promised Land.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

None

VIII. Adjournment

Chief Randy Swinton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chief Barry McRoy seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m.